

An interview with Adele Heckelsberg 1)

ADELE HECKELSBERG

An Interview Conducted by
Barbara Brugnaux
June 5, 1981

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NARRATOR DATA SHEET

06/05/81
DATE

Name of narrator: Adele Heckelsberg

Address: 1229½ South 17th St., Terre Haute Phone: 232-7347

Birthdate: 10/03/1893 Birthplace: Terre Haute, IN

Length of residence in Terre Haute: 87 years

Education: Terre Haute public schools, St. Patrick School,
St. Joseph High School

Occupational history: Terre Haute First National Bank;
absentee voting office at the Vigo County Courthouse.

Special interests, activities, etc. _____

Major subject(s) of interview: family business (grocery store)
and banking

No. of tapes: 2 Length of interview: approx. 2 hrs.

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Interviewing sessions:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Interviewer</u>
06/05/81	3 P.M.	1229½ S. 17th St. Terre Haute	Barbara Brugnaux

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ADELE HECKELSBERG

Tape 1

June 5, 1981

Miss Heckelsberg's residence--1229½ South 17th St., Terre Haute

INTERVIEWER: Barbara Brugnaux

TRANSCRIBER: Kathleen M. Skelly

For: Vigo County Oral History Program

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BB: The narrator's name is Adele Heckelsberg. My name is Barbara Brugnaux. The date is June 5, 1981. The location is Ms. Heckelsberg's home, 1229½ South 17th Street.

Why don't you tell me a little bit about the beginnings of your family as you were talking about?

HECKELSBERG: Well, my mother and father were both born in Germany, but they didn't know each other until they came here to the United States. They were married in 1889. My father was a cigar maker, and my mother was a dressmaker. And he had his own shop. We lived on North 14th Street, and that's where I was born . . . in the 800 block. And then my dad had a shop in the barn. We had a barn clear across the back of the lot.

BB: Was this the cigar factory?

HECKELSBERG: Uh huh. And he had made the cigars back there. My mother . . . we had a great big kitchen where she had a machine in there. And she usually had a couple of girls working for her.

And then in 1902 we came to 17th and Washington, and there was a grocery, a saloon, and a beer garden and a dance hall. Then my dad put in meat; had a butcher shop there with it. And we lived there for four years and then built this building up here. And originally this was the grocery in the corner and a pharmacy on the north side. And it was owned by Charlie Haupt, h-a-u-p-t. And, of course . . .

BB: Let's go back a bit then.

Where did your father learn how to roll cigars? Do you know?

HECKELSBERG: In the East. He had a brother in New York, and before he was married, he went out there and lived with them. And there were cigar makers there. And he learned to make cigars. And then they used to travel. They'd work in one town until . . . for a while, and then they'd get up and move to the next town or so. And then he ended up here in Terre Haute because he had . . . some of his relatives lived here

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HECKELSBURG: in Terre Haute, so then he ended up here.

BB: And how long did he have the cigar factory?

HECKELSBURG: Until 1902.

BB: And it started about when?

HECKELSBURG: Well, it started in . . . shortly after they
was married in about 1890.

BB: Were there other cigar factories in town?

HECKELSBURG: Yes. His brother had one right next door. Then
there was one on North 13th Street, and that was Nick
Wagner. And then Johnnie Miller had one at South
13th just north of Poplar. Now, he had a pretty nice
sized factory there; and he, I think, was one of the
last ones that made cigars by hand. And . . . see
his . . . one of his daughters married Frank Ryan.

BB: Umm. The Ryan family.

HECKELSBURG: Um hm.

BB: How did your father sell his cigars? Did he
have regular customers?

HECKELSBURG: He had regular customers.

BB: Did he have a particular brand? Did he sell
them . . .

HECKELSBURG: Yeah. He made . . . he named one for my sister,
and it was called "Junett," j-u-n-e-t-t. Then the
other, I don't know what they were. But, yeah, he had
a horse and buggy and always delivered these cigars.
Made 'em all week and delivered them then. And then,
of course, he quit.

BB: To open up . . .

HECKELSBURG: Then he started to open up down there. Then we
came up here and opened up a grocery and a meat shop.

BB: What about your mother? What kind of customers
did your mother have for her dressmaking? Do you
remember any of the names of people she might have?

HECKELSBURG: Yes. She used to sew for Clara Frisz and she
was very tall. My mother was short.
(Is this on?)

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BB: Um hm.

HECKELSBURG: And she was very short. My mother used to always have to stand on a footstool to fit her, but she sewed for her. And she sewed for her sister, and she sewed for the neighborhood -- people in the neighborhood. But I don't remember too many of them because, see, I was only eight years old when we moved down here.

BB: Then once your family moved to the Washington Street . . . once they got into the grocery store and saloon business down there, did your mother stop the dressmaking business then?

HECKELSBURG: Oh, yes.

BB: Why did your father want to go into that other business?

HECKELSBURG: Well, he thought he'd like a business of his own and the cigar making business wasn't going to last forever -- handmade cigars -- because there were factories going then.

BB: Oh, I see.

So, about how old were you when they moved to . . .

HECKELSBURG: Eight.

BB: You were eight?

HECKELSBURG: Umhm.

BB: How much do you remember of that time with the saloon and the beer garden?

HECKELSBURG: Umm, everything, that's the way I got my first bicycle.

BB: How did that happen?

HECKELSBURG: Well, a lady in the neighborhood -- it was Dr. Schumaker's mother -- had a Blue National bicycle. We had a bicycle for the delivery . . . short deliveries, and it was a man's bicycle so I was always riding it. Whenever they [my parents] wanted the bicycle, I was gone. So, the bicycle was eight dollars. If I washed the tables and benches in the beer garden for a dollar and a half a week, they'd buy my bicycle. So they did but that didn't help matters any because I still rode the man's bicycle. My girl friends rode mine.

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BB: (laughs)

HECKELSBURG: So, we still had the bicycles going.

BB: What kind of people came into the beer garden?

HECKELSBURG: Oh, everybody from around Terre Haute. See, you came in the front. You drove in (it was a family garden) and you drove in the front, and you could drive right straight through and come out the alley way from there. But one of the girls in our club, she remembers her dad bringing them out there.

BB: So the whole family could go?

HECKELSBURG: Oh, yes. Yes, it was a family affair. And my grandmother lived with us then, and she made homemade rye bread. And there was a fella that used to go out on East Washington and always on the way out, he'd always stop and get some sandwiches made out of the homemade rye bread. Nobody learned how to make it.

BB: What other kind of food did you serve?

HECKELSBURG: Sandwiches mostly. They didn't put out . . . you know they used to have saloons where they put out food. And some would have big bowls of soup that they'd serve, and the men would all come in and get their lunch. It'd be free lunch. But now that was a little before . . . that wasn't so much in our time. But we sold sandwiches. That was about what all we had in there.

BB: Did you . . . were there typically German type of food or . . .

HECKELSBURG: No. Every type.

BB: Oh, the food. Was the food . . .

HECKELSBURG: No. Huh uh. It was just what people liked.

BB: Where'd you get the beer?

HECKELSBURG: Terre Haute Brewing Company and People's.

BB: Was that another local brewery?

HECKELSBURG: Um hm.

BB: I hadn't heard of that one before.

HECKELSBURG: You know I think that one was down on South 2nd

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HECKELSBURG: or 1st, /corner of 1st and Wilson/ down around in there someplace. But the Terre Haute was at 9th and Poplar.

BB: Could you describe the way the beer garden was again or a little bit more?

HECKELSBURG: Yeah. This drive came clear through. Then there were little houses (they were lattice work), and we had one big one right in the center. And that was divided into two sections. One had a big long table and the benches and then you could walk through the middle of that, and on that other side there were some. Then there were some of them /little houses/ that were round. We had about six and some of them that were octagon. But they were all open.

BB: Did your family have to hire people to help them do the serving?

HECKELSBURG: Um hmm.

BB: What kind of hours did they have?

HECKELSBURG: Well, we closed at 12. Midnight.

BB: And what time did you open?

HECKELSBURG: Well, they wouldn't start coming to the beer garden until after supper.

BB: So it was mostly an evening.

HECKELSBURG: Evening. Um hmm.

BB: And how long was the beer garden open? I mean. . . like how early in the spring?

HECKELSBURG: Oh, all day all the time.

BB: All year long?

HECKELSBURG: Sure. But they wouldn't come all year 'round, see. But I mean we didn't have any opening date or anything.

BB: Oh, I see.

HECKELSBURG: They'd just come when it was nice.

BB: When the weather started nice, instead of going into the saloon, they went out to the beer garden.

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HECKELSBERG: They went out there. Um hm. Yeah, and they'd bring their families.

Then we used to have all the gardeners stop, and that's where we got our produce. And we knew all the farmers. They'd all come in and they all bought butter. (interrupted by ringing telephone)

BB: I think we were talking about getting your butter from the farmers.

HECKELSBERG: Oh, yes. The farmers would all bring in the butter and the eggs, and they used to bring in buttermilk. And then they brought in all garden stuff. And this place down there had what was called a wine cellar. You went down one flight of stairs and that was your basement. (They called them "cellars" in those days.) Then you went down another steep stairs, and there is where the wine was all kept.

BB: Oh. What kind of wines did they have?

HECKELSBERG: Most all kinds.

BB: Were they German wines?

HECKELSBERG: No, no.

BB: Local?

HECKELSBERG: Madeira wine and Virginia Dare, all those.

BB: Hmm. I don't know too much about old wine. I'll have to read up on that.

Do you remember what the prices were for beer, sandwiches . . .

HECKELSBERG: Beer was a nickel.

BB: A nickel a glass?

HECKELSBERG: Um hm. And the . . . a keg of beer was put in an icebox, and the faucet was brought out through the icebox. And there was a copper tray and that's where you drew the beer. Then they had a celluloid thing like a spatula, and you pulled that across the top, and that took off the excess foam.

BB: Aah! Did you ever serve the beer? Or did you just watch them?

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HECKELSBURG: Well, I just . . . I couldn't. I was only eight years old.

BB: I didn't think so, but . . .

HECKELSBURG: But I could draw beer for myself . . . as I ran through. My grandmother lived with us, and she liked beer. And we used to . . . why I'd draw a glass of beer and take it on in the house for her if I'd come through . . . if there was no one in the saloon. But if anyone was in there, why I wasn't allowed to do anything like that.

And you had to close at midnight. But if you had any beer drawn or anything . . . the railroaders used to call up, and if they'd come in on a run -- wouldn't be quite 12 o'clock -- why they'd call and they'd say that they just got in and "we'll be right up." And, "draw some beer and fix us lunch." So they'd have sandwiches and beer when they'd come up.

BB: What railroad was that?

HECKELSBURG: Southern Indiana. That was . . . then later it was the C & St. P. /Milwaukee/. When we were down there, it was the Southern Indiana.

BB: And then why did you leave that site and move up here to Franklin?

HECKELSBURG: Well, because every year they'd /Mrs. Arnold Meyer, later Oeser/ boost the rent, and they wanted an exorbitant price for the building. So my dad said, "Heck, we don't care whether we get the saloon or not. We'll just go up and build a grocery."

BB: Why couldn't you have a saloon up here?

HECKELSBURG: Because there was a schoolhouse right across here.

BB: So here you just had the grocery store, and the drugstore was next door.

HECKELSBURG: Um hm. The church people kinda got up in arms, and they were going to get up a petition. /They/ weren't going to let us build because they said they couldn't build a saloon that close to the church. And my dad said well, if they only known it, you couldn't build a saloon that close to a school. It didn't make any difference how

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HECKELSBERG: close the church was. It was the school that you couldn't. And we were just as well satisfied.

BB: Just to have the grocery store?

HECKELSBERG: Um hm. 'Cause that was a lot of hard work down there.

BB: I'm sure it was.

When you had the saloon and the beer garden, what time in the morning did it normally open? What time of the day did it normally open?

HECKELSBERG: Well, probably around 7, 6:30 or 7.

When we first moved down there, to 17th and Washington though, my mother used to get up in the middle of the night and listen for the farmers that would be coming, because nobody stopped there. Because they never bought from the farmers. I don't know who they bought from, the people who were in there before, but . . . and she'd have to stop them. Well, pretty soon it got so that they'd stop then. And we had regular customers that'd come in and bring us stuff.

And you used to go to the market and you'd buy watermelons. And you'd buy a whole load of watermelons.

BB: Is this the farmers' market?

HECKELSBERG: Well, it was up there on north . . . where was that? Second?

BB: I think . . . somewhere up in there.

HECKELSBERG: Yeah. That's where it was.

You used to go to the market, and you'd buy a grocery bag or a grocery truck full of watermelons. You paid a nickel apiece for them. And then you came back and you sorted them all up to size, and you'd sell them for . . . some we sold for a nickel, five, ten, fifteen, and twenty-five cents. But you bought 'em in the . . . in those days we had a horse and wagon. We had two horses and two wagons.

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BB: What kind of work did you do around the grocery store then?

HECKELSBERG: Well, the one I like the best was to go out on the wagon and deliver the groceries. Then as I got older though, I did take care of the books. See, you had charge customers in those days, and I used to post the charges.

BB: Your customers were mostly neighborhood people?

HECKELSBERG: Yes. Railroaders and all. We had some though that was 'way up in the north end. We had some that lived up on Beech Street; then we had some of them that lived 'way down at Arleth, and we went to them once a week. And the other customers we'd have every morning we'd go.

BB: You delivered every morning?

HECKELSBERG: Um hm.

BB: That's quite a bit of service.

HECKELSBERG: I'll say it was. You went out or a fellow went around and took the orders. Then he came back in and we filled all the orders. I used to help do that -- fill all the orders. Then we'd load up the wagon, and they'd go and deliver them, the groceries. So it was really two trips that they made every day. And then a lot of people would call in for -- we called them "short orders." And sometimes they'd deliver those just on a bicycle 'cause they'd be not very much. I remember one lady called up one time and wanted us to deliver a spool of thread.

BB: And did you? (laughs)

HECKELSBERG: No. (both laugh) Wasn't anybody going that way.

BB: Well, did you have customers that just walked in and . . .

HECKELSBERG: Oh, yes.

BB: . . . and bought things over the counter.

HECKELSBERG: Yes. And see in those days your stores stayed open until late. They stayed open . . .

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BB: How late?

HECKELSBERG: Oh, 10:30, 11 o'clock. And we always had one customer, and she'd come up in the evening. She'd always stay until the store closed and just visited.

And then the policeman came, and he'd report at our store . . . see, they didn't have . . . the policemen walked in those days. And this one in particular came; and the first night he came, why he wanted a package of Day and Night tobacco. And my dad put it out on the counter for him. He started to pay for it and my dad said, "No, that's all right." He said, "No, I won't do that because," he said, "I buy a package of tobacco every night but," he said, "if you don't care, I'll pick up an apple or something once in a while and eat it." My dad said that was all right.

Then finally, he got so that when wintertime came, why my dad . . . see, he the policeman had a key to the store, so then he came in and reported in the middle of the night. And so my dad said, "Now, if you want to, you come on in here and eat your lunch." And they gave him a key to the store, and he always came in then and ate his lunch here and reported to headquarters.

BB: Do you remember his name?

HECKELSBERG: Sure. Denny Sughrue.

BB: Sughrue? Any idea how to spell it?

HECKELSBERG: S-u-g-h-r-u-e, shug-roo. Now, let's see. I'm not real sure. You could find out from police records. He was big and he was heavy and he was tall. And then I had a sister that was seven years younger than I was. She and another little girl always waited for him on his first trip early in the evening. And then he'd always let them walk to right past . . . across the street. And sometimes he'd carry one in each arm. And then he'd set them down and tell them to run back now to the store. And he'd stand and watch them 'til they got back to the store.

But you didn't have any of that trouble that they have now. I imagine now half the police couldn't even make it if they was walkin' because they'd get jumped on.

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BB: What . . . then your parents ran the store,
that was their main business?

HECKELSBERG: Um hm.

BB: When did the store close?

HECKELSBERG: Well, we sold it to one of our clerks, but I
can't remember when. Oh, we sold it to . . . we
sold it twice. And then we came back both those
times. And then Oakley, when he had the stores here
in town, he came up and wanted to know if we'd be
interested in selling. And so my mother and dad
talked it over, and they said yeah, they thought
they'd like to. So they sold and then they Oakley
took it.

Then the drugstore had moved across the street,
and they had a little sundry shop there. So, Mr.
Oakley talked to my mother . . . my dad was gone by
then, and he talked to mother to see if she would
allow them to open . . . take the partition out and
make this all one big store. And that's what we did.
Then Oakleys had it; then Krogers took it. And now,
my nephew Robert W. Seidel . . . well, in fact,
we sold him the building, and he has a shop in there.
He hangs draperies and makes cornices and works on
different things for interior decorators.

BB: You said that you sold it twice and then came
back? How did that . . . I don't quite understand.

HECKELSBERG: Well, because they both . . . Stitch moved across
the street, and the folks thought it was better for
them to come back in the store 'cause we could get
our customers back easier than a new person. So we
did that.

And then the next time the fella was just about
to go broke, so my dad and mother bought it back from
him. But when we sold it to Oakley, that was it.

BB: Was there a large, strong German community in
Terre Haute when you were growing up?

HECKELSBERG: Yeah, but it wasn't down here. Yes. It was.
They had several German clubs here.

But now my dad and them never belonged to
them. Now, my mother was never much of a joiner,
but they had Germania Hall, you know, up there on
South 9th Street. And, oh, it was there . . . you
ask somebody about that. It was right there by
the firehouse and that was a German club.

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BB: But your family wasn't very active in . . .
with the German community?

HECKELSBURG: No, they were always busy and they both worked.

BB: Did your parents speak German to each other?

HECKELSBURG: No, but we had to speak German to my grandmother. But she never learned English and so we always talked German to her. I couldn't talk German 'til I was almost ready to go to kindergarten.

BB: Oh?

HECKELSBURG: Or I couldn't talk English, I mean.

BB: Yeah, that's the way my grandmother was, too.

Let's talk a little bit about your schooling then. What public schools did you go to?

HECKELSBURG: Went over here to Montrose /17th and Washington/. First I went to McKeen when we lived up on North 14th. That's where I was born. And then I went here and then I went up to St. Patrick's. One of the girls here left down here and went up there. And she liked it so well, so I wanted to go. So I did. So I went up there then and finished grade school there; and then, as I said, I went a year over to Indianapolis and then came back and finished down at St. Joseph's /Academy/.

BB: Where did you go in Indianapolis?

HECKELSBURG: St. John's.

BB: Why did you go over there?

HECKELSBURG: Well, they thought I was puny (laughs) and that maybe the regularity of the meals and things, it would help me. I only weighed 79 pounds when I was ready to go to high school. And I was as tall as I am now.

BB: You were puny.

HECKELSBURG: So I went over there and when I came home at Christmas, I weighed 98 pounds. So I stayed there that year. Then I came back and went over here.

BB: And finished at St. Joseph's.

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HECKELSBURG: Then they tore the school down.

BB: St. Joe's? High school? Where was that?

HECKELSBURG: At 5th and Walnut.

BB: So it was up with . . . where the same
St. Joe's complex is now.

HECKELSBURG: Yes. Where the church is, then it was
to the south.

BB: O.K. Right on . . . where there's just
an empty lot now.

HECKELSBURG: Yes.

BB: I didn't know there was a high school there.

So what did you do after you finished high
school?

HECKELSBURG: Well, I went up to Mae Helmer's who had a
school. She taught shorthand and typing, and
she was . . . she always took special . . . she
was a special Court reporter and also reported
conventions. But I didn't do any of that.
But I worked for her for a few years. We also
did work for people that came in and took . . .
for the lawyers around town. They'd have depo-
sitions and examinations to be taken, and I
used to take some of those.

And then I worked for the government for
a little bit.

BB: Now, that was Mae Helmer?

HECKELSBURG: Helmer, M-a-e H-e-l-m-e-r.

BB: And that was a school?

HECKELSBURG: She had a school and it wasn't big. Just
maybe six or seven pupils. Then she did all
this legal work for the different attorneys
around town.

So, then I was up there for a while and
then I got a job . . . well, I stayed there
until World War I. And then I got a job with
the ordnance department. They had their offices
at Columbian Enamelling, which is General House-
wares now. And I stayed there for, mmmm, maybe
not quite a year. Then I went to Jackson Hill

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HECKELSBURG: Coal Company. And from Jackson Hill Coal Company, then I went to the bank.

BB: Where was Jackson Hill located?

HECKELSBURG: The Tribune Building.

BB: Then you went to the bank. What year was that?

HECKELSBURG: 'Twenty-two.

BB: Nineteen /hundred and/ twenty-two.

HECKELSBURG: And I worked there 46 years.

BB: What did you do when you were first hired at the bank /First National Bank/?

HECKELSBURG: Well, I was . . . I worked for Mr. /Paul N./ Bogart.

BB: Bogart?

HECKELSBURG: Uh huh.

But then after . . . I left then for a year. And while I was gone, then he got somebody else. Then I came back in the transit department.

BB: Transit department? What did that . . .

HECKELSBURG: And then later I worked for Mr. /Wilson Naylor/ Cox who was president of the . . . that's mail checks.

BB: Oh.

HECKELSBURG: And then I worked for Mr. Cox. Then I worked for Mr. /William N./ Meyers (they were both presidents). And then I went in the . . . while Mr. Meyers was there is when the second World War was going on. And I had the bond department then. Sold war bonds.

Then I also did payroll. And that's what I was doing when I left there. I retired.

BB: When did you retire?

HECKELSBURG: In /19/68.

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BB: You must have seen a lot of changes in the bank.

HECKELSBURG: Oh, sure. When I went to work at the bank first, there was 17 employees. That included the officers.

And then see our bank consolidated with . . . I was in the First National. The it consolidated with McKeen. /The/ Terre Haute National consolidated with U.S. Trust; then there was two banks. So then we consolidated, so that made us four banks.

BB: Four banks altogether. O.K.

What were those?

HECKELSBURG: There was First National, Terre Haute National, United States Trust, and McKeen National. That's the four banks.

Then later, West Terre Haute came in. And that's what makes Terre Haute First National /Bank/ now.

BB: I see. When did that merger take place?

HECKELSBURG: Well, ours took place in 1928 with McKeens. And then our /merger/ took place with the Terre Haute National Bank and Trust Company in the fall of /19/32.

BB: How did those mergers . . . how was it working there when that kind of a merger was taking place?

HECKELSBURG: Well, it was working . . . it worked all right. Everybody stayed on their own job.

BB: Everybody stayed on their own jobs?

HECKELSBURG: Sure.

BB: So it went pretty smoothly.

HECKELSBURG: Oh, yes.

BB: How do you think those bank mergers affected the community?

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HECKELSBURG: I think they're all right. No use in having a bunch of little banks when you have one that can give you all the service that they can give you at one place. I think people are satisfied with them, don't you?

BB: I just wasn't . . . you know, I wasn't around at the time when they were used to having the smaller banks and then consolidating. I just wondered how the community reacted.

HECKELSBURG: Yeah, we used to have Indiana State; and we had U.S. Trust; we had Terre Haute Trust; we had First National; we had McKeens; we had Terre Haute National; we had Terre Haute Savings; we had People's Trust and Twelve Points. We had all those banks.

BB: Well, when did branch . . . when did banks start having branches?

HECKELSBURG: Well, where they are now, their main office was between 6th and 7th. When we merged with them, they kept our bank down there, the "511." And they made it a branch so that must have been our first attempt at branches. That was the first one that was here.

Then they . . .

BB: Kept growing.

HECKELSBURG: . . . kept growing and getting different branches.

BB: About how many employees did the Terre Haute First National have then when you left? They had 17 when you started.

HECKELSBURG: Oh, you mean the whole bank, this bank?

BB: Um hm, the one you were doing payroll for.

HECKELSBURG: They had over a hundred. But now, my land, I don't know how many they got.

BB: There have been quite a few new branches since then. Even in that 12 years, 13 years.

HECKELSBURG: All of them? No, they had Meadows before

ADELE HECKELSBERG

Tape 1

HECKELSBERG: I left. And they had Southland. And that's (pointing) my trophy. See on the table over there. That is the President's Award and I got the second one that was given.

BB: And what was that given for?

HECKELSBERG: Well, he just chose somebody out of the bank that he felt was worthy of it so He gave his dad the first one. Don Smith gave the first one to Henry Smith, and then he gave me this one. I was never so shocked in my life.

BB: Was it at a dinner?

HECKELSBERG: Yes. And I knew nothing about it.

BB: Oh, a real surprise.

HECKELSBERG: It sure was. It was a pleasant surprise.

BB: Yes. Very pleasant. It's a handsome trophy.

I think I'm going to be repeating a little bit here, but I want to make sure that I have it down.

You started in 1922 at the bank?

HECKELSBERG: Um hm. And left in . . .

BB: Who was . . .

HECKELSBERG: President? Paul N. Bogart.

BB: And that's who you worked for?

HECKELSBERG: Well, yes, right at that time. Then see when they merged, they opened the Terre Haute Trust and made it Merchants /The Merchants National Bank/. He went down there.

BB: I see. But you stayed with First National?

HECKELSBERG: Well, I wasn't his secretary then. I had gone into the banking.

BB: How did you get the job? Did you just walk in and apply or did you know they needed somebody or . . .

ADELE HECKELSBURG
Tape 1

HECKELSBURG: Well, I was washing the porch out here. And one of the tellers from up there called up and says, "Adele, Mr. Bogart needs somebody to work up here. You want to come up? And he said for you to come on up, he'd give you the job." See, I knew him, too, from down at the Trust building.

So I went up and I worked a half a day. That was on July 3rd. Next day was Fourth of July so I got a vacation.

BB: And then you just went right on working after that.

HECKELSBURG: Um hm.

BB: Were there many women working in the banks?

HECKELSBURG: Not too many at that time. When I went to the bank, there was . . . let's see, one, two, three, four . . . there was about six of us.

BB: Out of 17?

HECKELSBURG: Um hm.

BB: And were the others secretaries or . . .

HECKELSBURG: No.

BB: ... tellers or . . .

HECKELSBURG: They were . . . one was a teller and the others worked back in the proof department and in the transit. And then the other one was always the secretary.

BB: What was it like working in a bank during the Depression?

HECKELSBURG: Well, it wasn't very happy but then there was nothing you could do. The worst thing was when Roosevelt declared that holiday and closed all the banks. Well, of course, then when they reopened, you could only draw a certain percentage of what you had on deposit. And I'm telling you, if you . . . you . . . we just didn't go out and buy stuff because if we'd gone out and carried packages in, all the customers thought

ADELE HECKELSBERG
Tape 1

HECKELSBERG: well, we could get out money but we couldn't get ours either. So we just didn't . . . that wasn't shopping days in those times.

BB: Did any of the banks in Terre Haute close at that time?

HECKELSBERG: Not completely, no.

BB: They just closed for the bank holiday, but they all managed to make it through.

How long do you think it was really bad?

HECKELSBERG: Oh, land, it lasted a year or so. The Depression, you mean?

BB: Well, I was . . . the effects on the bank itself here. I know how long the Depression lasted. I just wondered if it was that bad for the banks that whole period.

HECKELSBERG: No. No. I think . . . no, no. Huh uh. See the Depression started before that holiday thing. It started in 1929. And . . .

BB: The holiday was about what? 1933?

HECKELSBERG: 'Thirty-three, sure.

BB: Right after Roosevelt was elected.

HECKELSBERG: Because he was elected in '32 and was inaugurated in March . . .

BB: Of '33.

HECKELSBERG: . . . of '33 and that's when they closed.

BB: How long was the bank holiday? Was it one day or . . .

HECKELSBERG: No, it was about a . . . I don't remember, really. Seemed to me like it was about three days or something like that. Just long enough for them to . . . we were the first ones open.

BB: The first bank in Terre Haute to reopen?

HECKELSBERG: Um hm.

BB: What was the purpose of the bank holiday?

ADELE HECKELSBURG
Tape 1

HECKELSBURG: I don't know.

BB: What happened at the bank during that period?
Were you all just sent home and the bank
completely closed or . . .

HECKELSBURG: The bank was closed and they . . . I guess
they thought everybody'd draw their money out
so they put a percentagewise on it. They didn't
. . . a lot of people never ever touched their
money. I mean it was . . . some people get
panicky. And I know one time (when was it?)
Citizens closed but they really closed, and
people got awful panicky then but there's . . .
We always had plenty of money there.

BB: Now, Citizens Bank, when did that close?
That wasn't during the Depression, was it?
That was later.

HECKELSBURG: No. That was before.

BB: Oh, before that.

HECKELSBURG: But I don't know the details on that and
I wouldn't . . .

BB: How was your own life affected during the
Depression, you and your family?

HECKELSBURG: Oh, I was young enough that . . . it didn't
bother us too much.

BB: You were able to continue working so . . .

HECKELSBURG: Oh, sure. I worked all the time and we had
the grocery store. I said really, you know,
about those things I wouldn't know because we
always had the grocery store and we had food.

BB: So you were always secure.

HECKELSBURG: You didn't always have all the clothes
you wanted but then that was all right. You
didn't need them anyhow.

BB: What are some of the other changes in
banking that you saw over the years? Can you
think of anything in particular?

HECKELSBURG: Well, they've got a lot more women in banking
than they used to have. See, when I was in the
bank, there wasn't any officers -- women officers;
that is in the early days and . . . at least

ADELE HECKELSBERG

Tape 1

HECKELSBERG: in Terre Haute. Now, there could have been in larger cities but not in Terre Haute. But I think the banks the way they are nowadays is better for the community.

BB: What about the changes that computers have brought in to the banking business?

HECKELSBERG: Well, of course, I've got to be for computers. I've got a niece that has two of them in computer business.

BB: Oh. (both laugh)

Well, how about in the bank itself though? What kind of changes do you think that made?

HECKELSBERG: I don't think it made too much.

BB: Did it change, like the number of people that they needed or . . .

HECKELSBERG: Hm um. I don't think they cut down on them at all. I don't think people lost their jobs because they put in computer because there was always work for them to do that fit in with the computer. And really, now I was awful fussy about that computer business, and see, I was in payroll. And I know somebody said, "Well, I don't suppose they'll ever put the payroll on computer until Adele leaves." Well, if I had known it was as easy . . . when I went to the courthouse, they'd put it in down there, and I took care of the clerk's payroll. Well, they just handed you your sheet, and you marked out the ones that had a change on them and just put that on there and handed it back, and there was your payroll.

And when I had the payroll, why you had to figure all that overtime. And you figured all the tax. And you figured social security.

BB: So, the computer really made it a whole lot easier for you.

HECKELSBERG: Yes. Very much.

BB: Well, were you . . . if you left the bank in '68, how much were they using computers at that time?

ADELE HECKELSBERG
Tape 1

HECKELSBERG: Well, they had . . . they put the payroll on the computer that year, in '69. And I guess they were putting the books on the computer. I don't remember.

BB: I was just trying to get some feeling for how much the computer was being used when you were still at the bank. Because it's so funny, they . . .

HECKELSBERG: Well, not too much 'cause it just started.

BB: Any other tales or stories from the years at the bank?

HECKELSBERG: No. Everybody . . . it always seemed like it was one big family. Of course, now there are so many different branches that you just don't know them all.

BB: That's true. Why did you retire?

HECKELSBERG: Old age.

BB: Well, it couldn't possibly have been; you continued working.

HECKELSBERG: Well, that was all right but it was the rule all those 65 and older had to retire. Now, they made that for the end of '68; that was when we were all supposed to retire. There was 17 of them retired the same year I did. I said all the way from the president down to one of the custodians, and I was in the middle. So anyway . . . well, but I was 75 then so I'd worked ten years over. And then I didn't work the next year at all. And then the next year, why Thelma Heddle called me and wanted me to go up in the absentee office and vote the people. So I did.

Then when Mr. Larrison was elected, why I got the job. I got the absentee office. I was head of it. I really wasn't the head of it; I just had to see that the work got done. Mr. Larrison and Ruth Eley were heads of it.

BB: What . . . you said earlier that you really weren't very active in politics, but you knew Thelma Heddle and . . .

ADELE HECKELSBERG
Tape 1

HECKELSBERG: Years ago when I was with Mae Helmer, she was active in politics. And Everett Sanders ran for congressman and he was elected. Governor McCray ran and he was elected, but he didn't prove out so good. He was a big dairy . . . or a big stock farmer up around Kentland. And in those days they sold what was known as "paper." And "paper" was like you bought somebody's note for that, see. And I think he sold a little too much paper to the state, so he got out. So we weren't very fortunate with him.

But we did all right with Everett Sanders. He ended up by being Coolidge's secretary.

BB: What about local politics in Terre Haute?

HECKELSBERG: Well, everybody remembers the Donn Roberts' escapade. Haven't you ever heard of that?

BB: I've only heard about it in bits and pieces. Why don't you tell me what you remember about it?

HECKELSBERG: Well, he and (I forget how many more of them), of course, had to serve time because they voted everybody and everything. See, you used to didn't have to register to vote. So, if you'd go in and somebody'd vouch for you, you could vote whether you were entitled to it or not. So they got a lot of votes that way.

So then, of course, Donn Roberts was in for just a little bit.

BB: What was Roberts' politics?

HECKELSBERG: Democrat. So he was in for a little bit.

But, as I said, if they'd a let him alone he'll probably

END OF SIDE 1

TAPE 1-SIDE 2

BB: Let's go back over the railroad part because I never heard that.

HECKELSBERG: Well, the ties used to run along /U.S. Route/ 41 down, not up on the highway but down . . .

BB: Those were the . . . that was the interurban, wasn't it?

ADELE HECKELSBERG
Tape 1-Side 2

HECKELSBERG: No.

BB: No?

HECKELSBERG: This was railroad . . . part he /Donn Roberts/ had . . . part ties and rails laid there. And how he got 'em, I don't know and how he got 'em laid, I don't know. But that was it. And we always said, "Well, if they'd a let him alone, we'd a had a railroad to Merom."

BB: Why did he want to put a railroad in?

HECKELSBERG: I don't know. That was just him.

BB: He was . . . on 41 . . .

HECKELSBERG: He was a Rose Poly graduate, too.

BB: I bet they're proud of that!

The tracks were on the side of 41, but where did they start?

HECKELSBERG: Oh, down here . . . probably in the neighborhood of where Allendale was and south of there. They didn't have very much put in, but they had a few miles of it laid. And, of course, . . .

BB: Then what happened with the scandal? Why was he arrested and sent to prison?

HECKELSBERG: Well, he was just crooked. It was a crooked election and so they sent him up. He and the judge and the judge's son, the Redmans, Denny Shea, A.O. Gillis . . . there was a whole bunch of 'em that had to go. About 17 of them. And they all came through here, too, on the Big Four. And we went to the station to see the train come through and . . . See, they were tried at Indianapolis. So . . .

BB: Um hm. In Federal Court?

HECKELSBERG: Uh huh. And then they were sent through here. They went to . . . what's the prison down in Atlanta?

ADELE HECKELSBERG
Tape 1-Side 2

BB: To a federal prison in Atlanta, Georgia?

HECKELSBERG: I think that's where they went.

BB: And they came through here on a . . .

HECKELSBERG: Came through here on the Big Four and all the shades were drawn on the train. So you didn't get to see anybody anyhow, but we all went up to see what we could see.

BB: Was there a big crowd there?

HECKELSBERG: Sure.

BB: About what year was that, do you remember? We can research that. I'm just asking to give me a . . .

HECKELSBERG: Yeah, it was in the 'teens. I think you'd be pretty safe in about '13 or '14 /1914-1915/. But see I didn't go up to Mae Helmer's until 1913. I graduated from high school in 1912 and then I went up there in January of '13. I don't remember whether that was the year or it was the next year that they caught him.

Then I worked . . . they used to question people, and they called them Secret Service men then. This man came over (and he had his office down in Chal Hamill's office). And I used to go in about 4 o'clock and work during . . . oh, until about 8. And anyone that couldn't come in during the daytime would come of an evening and they'd question them.

BB: And this was when you were working with Mae Helmer that you helped the Secret Service investigate the Donn Roberts' scandal?

HECKELSBERG: Um hm.

BB: Well, that's fascinating. Did they have a lot of witnesses coming in?

HECKELSBERG: Not too many late, but they had a lot of witnesses. But see the girl in the office took it during the daytime.

BB: And you helped out in the after hours.

HECKELSBERG: And I just helped him you know.

ADELE HECKELSBURG
Tape 1-Side 2

BB: It must have been quite an experience
at that age, being involved.

HECKELSBURG: Yeah, it was!

BB: Any other political scandals over the
years you remember?

HECKELSBURG: No. That's the only one that I was . . .
knew very much about.

Then I worked these other places, and I
never was very much interested in politics.

BB: Until you ended up at the courthouse in
1968, '69?

HECKELSBURG: No.

BB: You laid off a year, that's right.

HECKELSBURG: I laid off a year, and then in 1970 I went
up there and worked one month when the people
came in to vote. I was the Republican . . . one
of the Republicans. And then I worked up there.

And then when Mr. Larrison went in in '72,
why then I went in. See, he went in in '72,
and he also had to run in '72. Of course, see
Brighton left . . . Brighton ran for mayor.
And he beat Larrison out of it. Then, of course,
everybody thought, "Oh well, now whoever the clerk
would be, the Democrats would put in a clerk
then." But they couldn't because, see, the
clerk's office is part of the judicial circuit.
Therefore, the governor chooses. And of course,
the governor was a Republican so we got a
Republican in.

BB: And he put in Lee Larrison.

HECKELSBURG: Um hm. And then he had to run that very
first year.

BB: Because he was just filling out the end
of a term?

HECKELSBURG: See, he stayed in nine years. He ran twice
and then couldn't run any more. But he stayed
in that extra year.

ADELE HECKELSBERG
Tape 1-Side 2

BB: Well, how many mayors have you lived under here in Terre Haute? There were quite a few of them. Do any stick out in your mind as particularly good or bad mayors -- besides Donn Roberts, of course.

HECKELSBERG: Well, Donn Roberts and there was Mayor /James/ Lyons and there was Mayor /Edwin/ Bidaman and /Vernon/ McMillan, /Ralph/ Tucker -- they took it most of my life. Those two.

BB: McMillan and Tucker?

HECKELSBERG: (laughs) Tucker. Tucker was in how long? Twenty years? Twenty-one?

BB: Something like that.

HECKELSBERG: Um hm. Let's see if there's anybody else. Oh! Beecher.

BB: Oh, Sam Beecher.

HECKELSBERG: Um hm. He was in.

BB: I mean one that you think did a particularly good job for the city or particularly bad job.

HECKELSBERG: No, I don't think any of 'em were so outstanding. I don't think any of them were until Mr. Larrison got in there.

But he was the type . . . he had the city of Terre Haute at heart.

BB: Lee Larrison?

HECKELSBERG: Yes. He was interested in the city. People didn't like a lot of things he said or did, but then he did them for the good of the town.

BB: Well, what do you think then was the motivation of some of the other mayors?

HECKELSBERG: Well, they just were in politics; got elected and . . . I don't know how Tucker got elected so many times, but he did.

BB: He sure did. (laughs)

ADELE HECKELSBURG
Tape 1-Side 2

HECKELSBURG: Somebody liked him.

BB: Um hm.

HECKELSBURG: Of course, see the Democrats were in for so long . . . the Republicans . . . Larrison was the first clerk -- Republican clerk -- that we had since Stalnacker.

BB: And how long was that?

HECKELSBURG: Oh, land, that was years. Fred Stalnacker. I think that was 20 years.

BB: Tell me a little bit more about your court-house job in the absentee office.

HECKELSBURG: Oh, well, that was very interesting. And I'll tell you something about Mr. Larrison, about that. When you worked for Mr. Larrison in there, you worked as courteous and gave as much to the Democrats as you gave to the Republicans. He was not a one-party person in that office, because that was a two-party office, see? And you treated them both alike.

BB: Now, as I remember when I was coming down there, you also worked when the candidates registered?

HECKELSBURG: Yes, sure. Well, see I worked from January 1st on.

BB: Through the election?

HECKELSBURG: Yes. No, all year.

BB: All year, once you got . . . once you started.

HECKELSBURG: Yeah. Um hm. Well, I . . . mine was a full-time job. And the others came in a little later. But, yes, when the candidates come in to file, we did all of that; and we filed their expenses. And when I first went there, we had as many as 4,000 and 5,000 absentee voters. Well, see, they voted everybody in town. In the county, really.

Then when they cut out voting in the county, why that cut 'em clear down.

ADELE HECKELSBURG
Tape 1-Side 2

BB: I don't . . . I'm not . . . I don't quite understand. What do you mean when they cut out . . .

HECKELSBURG: Well, see, they passed a bill over there /Indiana General Assembly/ that anyone living in Vigo County could not vote absentee . . . could not vote by mail. They could vote absentee, but it would have to be, /a/ board /would have to/ go out and vote them. But you couldn't send /them/ out /in/ the mail.

See, when they sent out the mail, they had all of those people; and then the people would go there and they'd help 'em vote them. Now, I know of one or two that they just came and got their ballots from them and said, "Well, we'll take care of 'em for you." Because this one person . . . I knew her and she called me and I said, "Well, there's only one thing you can do," I said, "Get yourself up here and vote before your ballot comes in." And I said, "If you get voted before it comes in, why it'll be thrown out," that one voted by mail. But see, that's the way they'd do it. They'd get everybody to sign and vote by mail. Then a Republican or a Democrat, either one could go out and vote those ballots for those people because they'd think . . . people would think you were doing them a favor. And they would let you vote their ballot for them. And think it was so nice that you were helping them like you were. You were voting them the way you wanted to.

So anyway, then when they cut that out, then they have to vote by confined. Then it's two people -- a Democrat and a Republican -- go out there to vote them.

BB: That's somebody who's ill and can't get out of the house and people come to them?

HECKELSBURG: Yes. And in that we've had an awful lot of people. Well, they wouldn't be home. They didn't get off work until such and such a time. They used that to nth degree, too.

BB: Oh, people who said they couldn't come in to vote, but could . . . but they could have.

ADELE HECKELSBERG
Tape 1-Side 2

BB: So when you started there were 4,000 or 5,000?

HECKELSBERG: Oh, there was about 4,000 or 5,000 we sent out in the mail.

BB: I must have made a big difference in your work load.

HECKELSBERG: Oh, you're not kidding! And in the expense, too! Because in those days you sent out every one of them registered . . . they came back registered mail. And the registration kept going up and stamps kept going up. Now they don't have but right around 100 or so that vote . . . and they are people who live in Vigo County but are going to be gone someplace on that day -- on election day -- so you send it to where they are out of town.

BB: Sort of like a student at college out of town or something.

HECKELSBERG: Yes. Yeah, and you'd send it up there and they'd vote.

BB: Well, who . . . were both sides as equally guilty of this absentee . . . abuse of the absentee ballot?

HECKELSBERG: Well, we didn't have near as many ballots, so I don't know. Republicans. The Democrats had the majority of ballots.

Of course, I wouldn't say that some Republicans didn't . . . but some people want you to come and vote them. Well, you know if you're going to have somebody come, you listen to them.

But now when we went to vote them (I've gone out on the board years ago before I went in to the office), we would allow them, if they had someone there . . . Now say that your mother needed help. You were there. Your mother could take her ballot out in the other room. You could go in there with her and help her vote and bring it out and sign it before these people, and they couldn't do a thing about it.

BB: But if I weren't there to help my mother, then these people might be the ones that were helping her?

ADELE HECKELSBURG
Tape 1-Side 2

HECKELSBURG: They might. There's a lot of them think they have to vote in front of these people. Well, they don't! You do not have to show your ballot to any to anybody, how you voted.

BB: They just have to bring it to you and then take it back for you.

HECKELSBURG: Just show that they've put it in the envelope and sign it. Then that's all that's legally necessary.

Now, when they come up to the office to vote . . . now like myself. If I go up there to vote, I would have to have someone that would help me vote because I can't see enough to see the names. Therefore, I could ask for whoever I wanted to help me vote. But any other, you can't. They've got two girls up there that do that. A Democrat and a Republican will go up and help them.

BB: What do you think of the new punch card . . .

HECKELSBURG: I like 'em.

BB: . . . system?

HECKELSBURG: Like 'em a lot better than I did the others.

BB: Why?

HECKELSBURG: Well, they're just easier to do. And you're not always making your "X's" out of the line and out of the squares. You punch right down into where it is. If . . . and then when they come out and they're run through the machine, it's a lot quicker. You don't have all that counting to do. It takes . . . they get it done early that evening. Before, there would have been at least four shifts on it. And that's 8-hour shifts so No, I like them better. And a majority of people that I talk to are the ones that would come up, and we'd show them how to do it. Why they'd like it, because they said it was so much easier.

BB: I like it, too. I never liked the machines.

Any comments about the atmosphere in the courthouse when you were there? The political in-fighting and the . . .

ADELE HECKELSBURG
Tape 1-Side 2

HECKELSBURG: (chuckles) I got along with all of them. They all were nice to me. I don't think that Schoffstall will forget . . . I better not say that. I can get along with any of them.

BB: When did you quit the courthouse then?

HECKELSBURG: Last year, December.

BB: When Larrison went out of office?

HECKELSBURG: Um hm. I had to.

BB: Because?

HECKELSBURG: On account of my eyes. Well, see, and it's not open this year.

BB: Right, because we don't have any election.

HECKELSBURG: But I couldn't go back next year. Last year Kate Mast did all my work for me. You remember Kate up there?

BB: No, I don't.

HECKELSBURG: Don't you? Well, she was . . . she's up there. She did all . . . I couldn't write anything; I couldn't read anything, so she did all of that. And she took care of all that, and she took care of all the figuring and all that stuff. If it hadn't been for Kate, I couldn't have stayed the year out.

But I didn't have a bit of trouble with the Democrats. I mean they . . . we were all friendly. And if they came in and asked for anything, why we always did it for them. And there was no reason why we shouldn't because it was a two-party office. And that's the way Mr. Larrison felt about it.

BB: What do you think people in Vigo County, their attitude is towards politics? And government?

HECKELSBURG: (laughs) They all chew the rag all the time, but then they get out. I don't think they're as interested in voting as they used to be.

BB: Why do you think that might be so?

ADELE HECKELSBURG
Tape 1-Side 2

HECKELSBURG: Well, of course, they don't let them vote the way they wanted them to. And a lot of them won't come and go to the polls and vote. And a lot of them take the attitude that well, my vote wouldn't make any difference one way or the other. Well, it does.

BB: You think people think maybe there just isn't going to be a change no matter who they vote for?

HECKELSBURG: Well, I think so.

BB: When you were younger, were people far more involved?

HECKELSBURG: See, I didn't know. Of course, I've always voted ever since they voted. But . . . now, my dad used to work on the board; but as I say, it was people that they knew lived in that precinct that could vote because they didn't have any registration. I forget when that registration started, but they didn't have to register.

BB: How old were you when you first got to vote?

HECKELSBURG: Well, let's see. That must have been . . . we got to vote around '24, I think. Somewhere in the early '20s we got to vote. And, of course, I voted. But . . . oh, I wasn't all out for politics then.

BB: You weren't a suffragette?

HECKELSBURG: No. But I walked in their parade.

BB: Yes? Here?

HECKELSBURG: Sure. See, I was working for Mae Helmer then. That's when they had the parade.

BB: Where was the parade?

HECKELSBURG: Down Wabash Avenue. Everything was down Wabash Avenue.

BB: Was it a big parade? Were there a lot of women in it?

HECKELSBURG: Yeah, a lot of women.

ADELE HECKELSBERG

Tape 1-Side 2

BB: Who started it?

HECKELSBERG: Well, Mae Helmer was interested in it. Helen Benbridge was interested in it, and a Mrs. Brubeck and Professor Currie's wife from up at Indiana State was in it; some people by the name of Schrier was in it; Helen Benbridge was in it. Oh, they had quite a few. They had a big group.

BB: Did they have flags and banners?

HECKELSBERG: Sure.

BB: What was the attitude of the men in Terre Haute about the parade and women getting the vote?

HECKLESBERG: Well, they didn't seem to hate it so bad.

BB: Do you remember about when the parade was, if it was when you were working for Mae Helmer?

HECKELSBERG: It was when I was working for her and it must have been around in about, oh, no. It was in . . . now wait a minute. It was back . . . it wasn't in '22 at all. It was back in the 'teens.

BB: After the war, then?

HECKELSBERG: It could have been about '14. Did we get to vote for . . . I can't remember.

BB: That's O.K. Maybe we can check it and when I come back to double-check the tape with you, we can figure out the right date on it. I can look up when the amendment was signed and passed 1920. I'm ashamed to admit I don't know it exactly; I should.

HECKELSBERG: Well, I should know it; I was there!

BB: So, there was the one parade then? Was there/ any other real strong activity in Terre Haute for women getting the vote?

HECKELSBERG: No. Save, of course, they had their meetings and they all worked hard. Gosh, we worked for Everett Sanders like nobody's business. See, Mae Helmer sent out all the advertising.

ADELE HECKELSBURG
Tape 1-Side 2

BB: On the parade? Or the whole . . .

HECKELSBURG: On the campaigns. And that's how we . . .
how I . . . and we'd work sometimes all night
getting stuff out.

BB: What kind of stuff?

HECKELSBURG: Oh, like . . . telling about the candidates.
I remember with Everett Sanders, he had a big
picture. And they were . . . came in tubes.
We made the labels, put those on tubes; and we
got them out. The day before election is when
they were delivered to the houses 'cause we
figured the last one that they'd see would
impress on people's minds is the way she figured
it. And I think it must have.

BB: Still it's pretty sound advertising theory.
So you got involved in it through your work
with Mae Helmer then?

HECKELSBURG: Um hm.

Then I left and went out to Columbian and
worked for the government. Then came back in
town and worked for Jackson Hill Coal Company
and went to the bank.

BB: And you didn't continue your political
activity after that until you ended up in the
courthouse?

HECKELSBURG: We always voted. We always laughed. Whenever
we was ready to go vote, we'd always talk to
Mr. Nitsche. He was the cashier at the bank.
We'd always go up and find out who he'd like to
have in the different offices. Which would be
the best for, you know, for our business -- the
bank and all that. And we'd always go to him
and ask him to give us a list on who he wanted
us to vote for. We figured if that's who we
were working for, why we wanted them to have the
people in that they wanted.

BB: Did you ever not vote the way he . . .

HECKELSBURG: No, we always voted the way he said. He
didn't give us a whole list, I mean. It was
just maybe, like for the councilmen. He'd ask . . .
he'd have a certain person that he wanted in.
And, usually, we were the Republicans; Mr. Nitsche
was, too, but he'd always give us Bob Welch who
was a Democrat councilman.

ADELE HECKELSBURG
Tape 1-Side 2

BB: But you would go to him and ask. He didn't come to you?

HECKELSBURG: Um hm. Oh, no. He'd never come to us. And you'd go to Mr. Larrison and ask him. He would not tell you who to vote for. 'Cause I've gone in and asked him right out. And he'd say, "No. I won't tell you who to vote for." He said, "If you want to know, I'll tell you who I voted for . . . who I'm going to vote for." So you could just . . . but he wouldn't tell you to vote for anybody. Guess he thought if you didn't have sense enough to vote for the right person, why . . .

BB: Well, why don't we talk a little bit about transportation over the years and how that has changed.

HECKELSBURG: Well, when we first came down here, we had the streetcars.

BB: "Down here" was down on South 17th?

HECKELSBURG: South 17th Street. And they ran to Hulman Street. And we had the streetcars with the trolleys on them and the tracks.

Then transportation got a little bit slack on it. Wasn't getting too good of service, so a bunch of people started what was known as the jitneys. Now, have you heard of those?

BB: Hm um.

HECKELSBURG: Well, people who owned cars or would buy a car, Ford or anything like that, then they might hire some fella to drive. Then they'd come and you'd . . . It'd cost you a nickel to ride, and those jitneys sometimes would be loaded to the gills. You'd be sitting on the doors and everywhere else. Well, then we had the jitneys. And the way they'd work it would be . . . see the (starts to laugh) jitney'd come just a little ahead of the streetcar all of the time, and that way they could pick up their customers. But now . . . and then they'd stand at 7th and Wabash, and that's where you got them to come home.

ADELE HECKELSBERG
Tape 1-Side 2

BB: Now, did the jitneys keep regular runs
like the streetcars or . . .

HECKELSBERG: Well, just about. They'd wait though to
get a full load if they could. But, yeah, they'd
run like that.

BB: They ran all day long?

HECKELSBERG: Yes. Ran all day long and all evening.

BB: They were kind of like . . . sort of like
taxicabs, maybe.

HECKELSBERG: Well, something. Only it only cost you a
nickel to ride.

And . . . then we had interurbans in those
days. You know what they are?

BB: I've heard about . . . a little bit about
the interurbans.

HECKELSBERG: Well, the interurbans would run from like
Brazil to Terre Haute. Well, it run to
Indianapolis, too, and maybe over to Paris.
And I think at one time they had an interurban
to Sullivan.

Then they got so we had buses after the
streetcars. We had big streetcars . . . We
used to have these summer cars that were all
open and had seats across, clear across. And
you rode on those in the summertime. They
were nice.

Then we had a double-decker streetcar here.
On the first one they climbed up to the top.

BB: There was only one like that?

HECKELSBERG: One that I ever knew of.

BB: Did that run up and down 17th Street?

HECKELSBERG: No. I don't know where it ran. I know
if you were . . . one time we were going on a
picnic up at McKeen school and . . . now how
did it get there? I know they were going
on it to go to the park.

See, Collett Park was quite a place in
those days. Well, and so was Forest Park.

ADELE HECKELSBERG
Tape 1-Side 2

BB: In Brazil?

HECKELSBERG: No. Up here.

BB: Oh, where was that?

HECKELSBERG: You know where Markle's Mill is?

BB: Um hm.

HECKELSBERG: Well, it's right there. The Terre Haute
First National bank owns it now.

BB: Oh. I've never heard it called Forest
Park.

HECKELSBERG: They call it Forest Park. And they have
it there.

And then they . . . the interurbans ran
to Clinton. Then I don't know how you got to
Forest Park. I don't remember that. 'Cause
it was . . . this Clinton line came down
Lafayette.

BB: Well, did you make many trips on the inter-
urbans?

HECKELSBERG: Oh, yeah. We used to go all the time.

BB: Where'd you go?

HECKELSBERG: Oh, we'd go to Paris and . . . I've gone
to Indianapolis several times on the interurban.
And I've been to Sullivan. St. Mary's of the
Woods had an interurban . . . went over there.

BB: Do you remember what the fares were like?

HECKELSBERG: No. They weren't very much though. Our
bus . . . our streetcar fares were a nickel
and the jitneys, of course, was a nickel. But
the interurbans, oh, I'd say probably . . . I
don't know what it was to St. Mary's. I bet it
wasn't more than a quarter though. And I don't
know how much it was . . . It had to be so much
for a certain distance.

Then they'd to to Greencastle. Indianapolis
had an interurban over there. You remember . . .
did you ever hear Dr. Cusick, the dentist here
in town? His father ran an interurban.

ADELE HECKELSBERG
Tape 1-Side 2

BB: When you say he "ran it," was he a . . .

HECKELSBERG: Motorman. They had motorman and conductor on them. And they did on the streetcars, too. Had a motorman and conductor.

BB: The motorman was like the driver and . . .

HECKELSBERG: Right. And the conductor collected fares. Now . . . then when they got to put money boxes on, then they only had the motorman.

BB: Well, how did you get to work over the years? How did that change?

HECKELSBERG: Usually, streetcar. Streetcar and the jitney.

BB: And then later? Were there buses that took you downtown?

HECKELSBERG: Um hm. I didn't drive very much to work. And I don't know why, but we'd usually . . . but when I first went to work at the courthouse . . . now let's see, it's when I worked with Thelma downstairs, that year, our bus came up and came back of the courthouse and stopped out there. And when we'd go home, it turned around up there someplace and then we'd come home.

Then later, why everything got to go down to 7th and Nabash.

BB: You did learn how to drive?

HECKELSBERG: Um hm. Long before they had drivers' license. [1] learned on a 1913 Studebaker.

BB: Was that your family's car?

HECKELSBERG: Um hm. It was a seven passenger. The kids were talking about it. One of my . . . well, my nephew's grandson, he was one of the ones down here. He said, "Aunt Adele, did you ever drive a car?" And I said, "Yes, I did." I said, "Long before you ever had to have a driver's license." And . . . it was interesting to drive in those days. You knew people's cars by the sound of the motors. Now that sounds silly. But there wasn't . . . well, you could always tell them. You could tell them whose car it was, you know. You knew everybody that had a car, knew the cars.

ADELE HECKELSBERG
Tape 1-Side 2

BB: Did you ever own a car yourself?

HECKELSBERG: Well, no, it always belonged to . . .

BB: Family?

HECKELSBERG: Family. Then later we had Fords. But I quit driving. I quit driving when I was 75. Thought that was long enough.

BB: Well, the way the drivers are these days . . .

HECKELSBERG: I wouldn't want to drive. I wouldn't want to drive even if I could see. Now, maybe if I had never quit driving and would be driving, I might. But the way they drive now, I wouldn't want to drive. It's . . . there's no fun in . . . in those days, my land, you could get in the car and take a nice drive on a Sunday afternoon. Well, now it'd be a day's work.

BB: Where would you go on a drive like that?

HECKELSBERG: Oh, Rosedale was quite a nice drive. The road was good. It was gravel, of course, but it was a good drive. Sullivan, you'd go down there and drive up to Clinton. Not very far.

BB: Anything special you'd do when you got there? I mean was there a restaurant you wanted to go to?

HECKELSBERG: No.

BB: Just drive around and see . . .

HECKELSBERG: Just drive around. Just take a drive.

BB: At the price of gasoline these days you can't . . .

HECKELSBERG: Land! Gasoline then was only eight and nine cents a gallon. It's now less than what the tax is.

BB: That's true.

HECKELSBERG: And your cars didn't run at a big high . . . if you went 45 miles per hour, now you was going pretty good.

ADELE HECKELSBURG
Tape 1-Side 2

BB: Did you like to drive that fast?

HECKELSBURG: Hm?

BB: Did you like to drive that fast?

HECKELSBURG: Oh, yes. But see, you didn't have paved roads then, when I'm talking about. And they'd be good gravel roads though. But . . . yeah, but your average speed would be around 35.

BB: Now, was the . . . the 1913 Studebaker, was that a new car when your family got it?

HECKELSBURG: No. We got it in about '15 or '16. It was a good car.

BB: What other kind of things did you do for recreation, entertainment when you were young?

HECKELSBURG: Oh, we'd have parties at the house. Everybody had parties. And we'd go to dances, picture shows [We] used to go down to the picture show on Sunday afternoon, and we'd usually take in three. At the Orpheum, maybe the Crescent, or Princess or go on down to the Savoy or the Fountain. That wasn't too good a place to go that far, but you'd always go to two or three of them.

BB: What do you mean it wasn't a good place to go that far?

HECKELSBURG: Well, it was kinda . . . that was getting a little bit close to the West End.

BB: I see.

HECKELSBURG: And . . . now I never did see any, but they said (laughs) in one of those theaters they used to say the rats . . . they had rats in there. Now, I never saw 'em, but they said there were.

BB: The Savoy and the Fountain?

HECKELSBURG: The Savoy and the Fountain, um hm.

And the Fountain was run by very nice people, but, of course, rats will get in anyplace.

And then the Orpheum there -- you know,

ADELE HECKELSBERG
Tape 1-Side 2

HECKELSBERG: on Wabash Avenue on the north side -- that was a nice theater. And then on the . . . we used to go to road shows, though, a lot.

BB: What were those?

HECKELSBERG: Well, like musicals, things like you'd go to Chicago now to see. Say that "Sound of Music" is on the stage. Well, now you'd . . . those kind of shows.

And every Thanksgiving we always went to see the minstrel show. They had a wonderful . . . and it'd always be here on Thanksgiving. And we always went to see that. I went to see that when I was a little kid.

BB: Where would that be held?

HECKELSBERG: The Grand Theater.

Then the Elks used to put on some pretty good minstrel shows.

BB: Did you ever go on any of the river boats?

HECKELSBERG: Yeah. Oh, about twice.

BB: What were they like?

HECKELSBERG: Well, they were nice boats. It was a . . . the boat was big enough that you had . . . you could sit inside if you wanted to. And then you could sit right on the porch-like thing on the outside. And it'd go up . . . it wouldn't go very far up the river.

BB: Well, did they have like dances and music on some of those?

HECKELSBERG: Yeah. They'd have dances on the boats.

They had skating parties, but I never went to those.

BB: Roller skating?

HECKELSBERG: Um hm. Never went to those until I went to work at the bank and they had one. And I fell. And I tore the skin loose off of the bone in this

ADELE HECKELSBERG
Tape 1-Side 2

HECKELSBERG: thumb. And it swelled 'way up. Then we had a registered nurse -- friend of ours -- and she came down and she kept it in ice. You know that swelling went right down. Never had a bit of trouble.

BB: Bet you never tried roller skating again.

HECKELSBERG: Huh uh. No. I was never very good at roller skating. They used to skate out on the sidewalk a lot, too, but . . . Now my nephew, the one that's in store here, my gosh, he just lived at the skating rink.

BB: I was never much for roller skating. On the street but not . . .

HECKELSBERG: Not in the . . . We used to go out and watch them once in a while.

We always laughed about Bob. He and Dr. Strecker . . . see, Dr. Strecker's father owned the skating rink. So Dr. Strecker's wife's brother was here one weekend . . . one week in the summer; and they took him out to skate, Bob and Bill. So, they got him out on the floor, and they was going to do a trick with him. Gosh! The kid didn't know how to do the trick, and I don't know whether it was Bill or Bob that had him. One of them had him. But anyway that kid went, and I guess he banged himself up. Bill had to take him into the hospital and put I don't know how many stitches in his mouth.

We always kid Bill about having his brother-in-law come down to visit him and then take him out and wreck him.

They used to have a good time, though.

BB: What did you think when Terre Haute started to be called "Sin City"?

HECKELSBERG: Well, that's when Donn Roberts was sent up. I went to Chicago. And the girls had a party. And one of the fellas asked me, said "Where are you from?" And I said, "Terre Haute." "Oh," he said, "that's where they send the mayors to the penitentiary, isn't it?" We were known all over, everyplace. But I don't think Sin City . . . that thing here, we weren't any worse than anybody else.

ADELE HECKELSBURG
Tape 1-Side 2

- BB: What about . . . I've heard stories like in the 19/20s the gangsters came down from Chicago and . . .
- HECKELSBURG: They did and we had them right across the street here. They had enough TNT there to blow up the whole south end.
- BB: Do you have any idea who it was or what they were doing with it or . . .
- HECKELSBURG: Yes. I forget what gang it was. I think it was a gang from over at St. Louis. But they caught them over here in the building.
- BB: And they had TNT stored in there?
- HECKELSBURG: Said they had enough there they could have blown up the whole south end.
- BB: Well, had you noticed anything? I mean like a lot of coming and going over there?
- HECKELSBURG: No.
- BB: Or strange people or anything?
- HECKELSBURG: Hm um. Well, you see I wasn't home. I was working downtown.
- BB: That's right; you were working.
- HECKELSBURG: And that didn't bother me much. Oh, this place over here a while back was terrible. They condemned that building now, and they're going to tear it down. And it's a nice looking building on the outside. Good brick.
- BB: When you were in the banking business, were there any financial scandals in town you remember?
- HECKELSBURG: Oh, we had some go short, but that happens all the time. I don't know though. They haven't had it for a long, long time -- anyone that's gone short. But we had several to do it.
- BB: Were they . . .
- HECKELSBURG: Yeah. They were punished for it.

ADELE HECKELSBURG
Tape 1-Side 2

BB: Do you think that there haven't been any
in a while because . . .

HECKELSBURG: I don't think so. I haven't heard of any.
But these were just plain . . . they just plain
took the money.

BB: Nothing very sophisticated about it, huh?

HECKELSBURG: Well, it wasn't an ungodly amount either.
It was something like, oh four thousand dollars
or something like that. Well, that wasn't very
much. One person that got the four thousand,
he'd worked at the bank forty years.

BB: Just gave into temptation after all that
time, hm?

HECKELSBURG: Well, I think he had another lady on the
side.

BB: Aaaaah!

HECKELSBURG: And this cost him.

That's usually what happens. When I worked
in the bank, though, a fella came in one day; and
he wanted to open a savings account. I was
working in the savings cage and this fella
came in. I was working in the savings cage
and he came in. He wanted to open an account.
And he opened it, and I don't know why I looked
at the check and I kinda . . .

END OF TAPE

TAPE 2

HECKELSBURG: Well, he came in and he opened up a savings
account with a check. Then he asked me for
change for a twenty, and I gave it to him. And
I got suspicious of him right away. And I took
the twenty then over to our head teller and I
says, "Give me change for this, will you? Give
me one's." So, he did and he said . . . "Oh,"
I said, "I really don't want the one's." I said,
"Is the twenty O.K.?" And he says, "Sure."
And I said, "Well, O.K."

So then I told the auditor about the check,
and also When I went out to lunch, why they
called the bank that it was on. It was on the
Second National at Richmond, Indiana. It was

ADELE HECKELSBURG
Tape 2

HECKELSBURG: a company check. No, it wasn't a company check. It was made to him.

So, then they said, no, they didn't have any account like that at all. So, they decided it was phony so they called police headquarters. And so the police then inquired from the other banks or . . . no, I think Mr. Sutherland called a couple of the other banks and asked them if they had anything like that; and they did, so they called the police.

So, the plain-clothes men sat in every bank the next morning. And he said, "What do you think he'll do?" "Oh," I said, "he'll probably come in and say he put in too much money and he'd like to take some of it out. So, the plain-clothes man was sitting in the back; and one of the fellas was standing up there talking to me. And I said, "Oh, my land, Frank, here he comes."

So, he went over to the teller across the way and wanted to cash a company check, a payroll. He wanted a payroll check cashed. That is, for a payroll for a construction company. So he handed it to Wilma. He said, "Do we have an account like for this company here?" And he said, "Well, I've got an account here." He said, "Savings. I've got a savings over there." And he said, "Well, you'll have to take it over there then and get it O.K.'d." So, he brought it . . . came over then and Mr. Nitsche came out from behind and started over. And I said, "Mr. Nitsche, he'd like to have this O.K.'d, but," I said, "Of course, we can't O.K. it yet. We'll have to send it through for collection, won't we?" And he said, "Yes. We'll have to send it through collection." "We can't cash it 'cause it hasn't had time to clear," he told the young fella. And the fella said, "Oh, that's all right." He said, "whatever you have to do."

Well, with that the plain-clothes man walked up back of that fella. And that fella just went like this. (illustrates by throwing her arms up) Arms straight up. They sent him up. First time he'd ever tried it, he told them.

Nice-looking chap. But he had clothes galore, so I don't know how much he'd got. Said he was traveling from one of the southeastern states

ADELE HECKELSBERG
Tape 2

HECKELSBERG: out to a midwest state. He was going to join a carnival. Whether that was the truth or not, nobody ever knows. But anyway, he didn't get anything from us.

BB: Well, when do you think that was?

HECKELSBERG: Well, that was about in 1926, I'd say. 'Cause that's when I was in the savings cage. I never liked the cage.

When we consolidated with McKeen's, Mr. Sutherland was standing there talking. And I said, "Am I going to get to keep my job?" And he said, "Well, afraid not, Adele. They've got a man they want to put in this cage." I said, "I don't mean the cage. I mean am I going to get to stay with the bank." He said, "Oh, sure, you're going to stay. But," he said, "I can't let you have this cage." I said, "That's fine. I never liked the thing anyway." He said, "You didn't like it! You mean to tell me you stayed in here two years and never said you didn't like it?" I said, "You didn't ask me if I liked it. All you said one day is, 'Adele, go over and take the cage,' and I said, 'I don't know anything about it.' You said, 'I'll come over to see if we can balance you.' So, I said, 'What was I to say?'" But I got rid of the cage.

BB: (laughs) Where did you go after that then?

HECKELSBERG: Well, I worked back and balanced deposits -- sorted deposits and checks and sorted them to the bookkeeper they belonged to and balanced them out to them.

And then when I went . . . then I went to the trust department. Then I went down to . . . when they consolidated with Terre Haute National, why I went down there and I worked in the trust department. And then I . . . I worked in the bond department down there. I sold war bonds. Oh, boy! That was a busy time. We worked every day, every Saturday, every Sunday, all the holidays. And we had the plants -- the ordnance plants down south. And Mr. Reed said, "Now, we're not going to write bonds for them." He said, "They can just send them up to Federal Reserve where they get paid." See, we didn't get paid for writing bonds. So he said, "We're not going to write them."

ADELE HECKELSBURG
Tape 2

HECKELSBURG: So, one day he called me up there. And he said, "Adele, this man wants us to write some bonds for him, and he wants to know exactly how you want him to have them written." Have the lists made. So, I told him and showed him and made the list. After the man left, I went up and I said, "Mr. Reed," I said, "I thought you said we weren't going to write those bonds." He said, "Well, what would you have said if he asked you?" I said, "I'd said the same thing you did only I wouldn't have said what you said first." (laughs)

He said, "Well, I didn't know what to do." But when it came to the big bond list, where they'd have 1100 or 1200 in a week . . .

BB: This would be employees at the various plants buying war bonds?

HECKELSBURG. Yeah. Um hm. At . . . the ones especially down at the ordnance, why they would send girls up and the girls would type them. But we would have to go over all of them. And see that they were all right and get them ready to send out. Oh, we used to send them . . . we had an awful big business. And see, we didn't get paid for writing them.

BB: The bank didn't get paid?

HECKELSBURG. Hm um. We used all our own carbon paper. We used our own typewriters. They paid the girls' salaries, and all we'd get back would be the money that's postage we'd pay on the stubs that went to Fed [Federal Reserve Bank]. And we'd get the postage where we had to mail out some of them to people. Now, that's the only money we'd get back on them.

But now when they came in to cash them, why they paid them so much. The bank'd make something on that. They wouldn't keep them any length of time. They'd get them, and the very first day they'd be allowed to cash them they'd bring them in and cash them.

BB: How long . . . how good was . . . long was a war bond good?

ADELE HECKELSBURG
Tape 2

HECKELSBURG: Well, it was good ten years, but any bond that you wrote in January could be cashed then in March, the first day of March. They had to be 30 days, I think; and then they could cash it. And a lot of people would do that! They didn't keep them.

BB: So they didn't keep them to make any money off of them.

HECKELSBURG: Why, no!

BB: Well, how long did that . . . I mean was it that way for the entire length of the war?

HECKELSBURG: Sure.

BB: That you were that busy?

HECKELSBURG: Um hm. 'Til the war stopped.

BB: Any other memories of what it was like around here during World War II? Or how your life was affected besides being very busy?

HECKELSBURG: It wasn't affected because we were so busy we didn't have time to worry about anything else. I worked all day, and Helen Mace worked upstairs on her job and come down after work and helped write them.

The first day after Pearl Harbor, I had a desk drawer there, and I was just throwing the money in. And Mr. Meyers was our president then. And he came back and he'd look at the money and he'd said, "Adele, you can't put your money in like that. You've got to get your money sorted up." I said, "Mr. Meyers, we don't have time." He said, "Go out and get anything you need to set in there." He said, "Get anything. Get anything you need." And I said, "Well, we will but just . . .

Well, we closed up that night, balanced right off to the penny. So, we called him up. Well, he was sure glad we balanced, but he said to be sure and get that drawer fixed.

So Harold Fox, he built us a little tray that fit in there. It wasn't any way to keep the money, but what could we do? We didn't know we were going to have that many people. They just swarmed in there.

ADELE HECKELSBERG
Tape 2

BB: That first day?

HECKELSBERG: Um hm.

BB: Well, do you have any thoughts on how Terre Haute has changed over the years?

HECKELSBERG: Doesn't look anything like it used to be. But then, what are you going to do?

BB: Do you like it better the older way?

HECKELSBERG: Well, I would, yes. But then, that's because that's where I was raised. I don't like to see them tear all those stores down downtown and Now they don't have . . . like Osco's, now that was an awful easy place to go and get most anything you'd want. And Root's . . . I still go downtown to Meis's to buy clothes. That mall wears me out.

BB: I don't like the traffic down there.

HECKELSBERG: No.

BB: What wears me out is just getting there.

Well, what do you think of this idea of the new mall downtown? The redevelopment?

HECKELSBERG: Should have done it a long time ago. If they were going to have it, why didn't they do it when they started one of these others? I don't know how it'll work. That's . . . it's not going to work as good now as they had . . . 'cause they're not going to get some of those stores back.

BB: How do you think the people have changed or do you think the people have changed?

HECKELSBERG: No, I think they . . . I don't think they've changed any. It's just a younger group, and we were that young once ourselves. So

BB: Any other comments or thoughts right now you want to throw in?

HECKELSBERG: No, I think you got it all. I say you ought to come to club some day.

BB: Yes. They'd do good.

ADELE HECKELSBURG
Tape 2

HECKELSBURG: (laughs heartily) They get to talking about this and that and the other thing, you know.

BB: Um hm. Maybe we ought to give you a tape recorder you could take along with you. When it gets going good, you could turn it on, huh?

HECKELSBURG: But I'd have to know when to shut it off.

BB: Well, that's true. (laughs) You'd have to edit it.

HECKELSBURG: Yeah.

BB: O.K. Well, thank you.

END OF TAPE

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